

## Message Text

CONFIDENTIAL

PAGE 01 PARIS 21701 01 OF 02 221840Z

46

ACTION EUR-12

INFO OCT-01 NEA-10 ISO-00 EURE-00 SCS-03 FBO-02 SCCT-01

DHA-02 AID-05 CCO-00 PM-04 H-02 INR-07 L-03 NSC-05

SP-02 OC-05 OPR-02 PA-01 USSS-00 PRS-01 SCA-01 A-01

OMB-01 SS-15 SY-05 CIAE-00 DODE-00 NSAE-00 NSCE-00

SSO-00 USIE-00 INRE-00 EB-07 COME-00 TRSE-00 AGR-05

CIEP-01 SIL-01 LAB-04 MC-02 ACDA-05 IO-10 /126 W

----- 035221

O P 221819Z AUG 75

FM AMEMBASSY PARIS

TO SECSTATE WASHDC IMMEDIATE 2439

INFO AMEMBASSY ROME PRIORITY

AMEMBASSY ALGIERS PRIORITY

AMCONSUL BORDEAUX

AMCONSUL LYON

AMCONSUL MARSEILLE

AMCONSUL NICE

AMCONSUL STRASBOURG

C O N F I D E N T I A L SECTION 01 OF 02 PARIS 21701

E.O. 11652: GDS

TAGS: FR PINT PBOR

SUBJECT: DISTURBANCES IN CORSICA

REF: PARIS A-608, DECEMBER 11, 1974

SUMMARY: AN ARMED CORSICAN AUTONOMIST CONTINGENT OCCUPIED A WINE COOPERATIVE NEAR THE CITY OF BASTIA ON AUGUST 21 AND TOOK FOUR NORTH AFRICANS AND TWO FRENCH TOURISTS HOSTAGES. THEY ARE DEMANDING THE LIBERATION OF AN IMPRISONED COLLEAGUE AND THE REDISTRIBUTION OF LAND BOUGHT UP BY FRENCH FARMERS WHO ARRIVED IN CORSICA FROM ALGERIA AFTER INDEPENDENCE IN 1962. THE FRENCH NATIONAL  
CONFIDENTIAL

CONFIDENTIAL

PAGE 02 PARIS 21701 01 OF 02 221840Z

GUARD HAS BEEN DISPATCHED TO DEAL WITH THE SITUATION,

BUT EVEN IF THEY SUCCEED IN FREEING THE HOSTAGES, THE PROBLEM OF AUTONOMY FOR CORSICA--WITH THIS NEW STEP OF ASSAILING HUMAN LIFE--PROMISES TO BE AN EVER GROWING ONE FOR GOF. END SUMMARY.

1. DURING THE WEEKEND OF AUGUST 16-17 THE ACTION POUR LA RENAISSANCE CORSE (ARC) HELD A MASS RALLY IN CORTE ATTENDED BY 8000 MILITANT MEMBERS. PRESIDED OVER BY DR. EDMOND SIMEON, THE PRESIDENT OF ARC, AND HIS BROTHER MAX, THE MEETING PRODUCED A MANIFESTO PROMISING TO ACTIVATE THE MOVEMENT IN THE INTERESTS OF CORSICAN AUTONOMY. EXACTLY FOUR DAYS LATER, NOT ONES TO SLIGHT THEIR WORD, 40 ARC MILITANTS TOOK OVER AT GUNPOINT A WINE COOPERATIVE IN ALERIA, A VILLAGE FORTY MILES SOUTH OF BASTIA ON THE EAST COAST OF THE ISLAND. SOVINCOR, THE COOPERATIVE IN QUESTION, IS OWNED BY HENRI DEPEILLE, A PIED NOIR (FRENCHMAN REPATRIATED TO METROPOLITAN FRANCE AFTER ALGERIAN INDEPENDENCE). HIS IS ONE OF THOUSANDS OF FAMILIES THAT, IN THE MID-SIXTIES, EMIGRATED TO SOUTHERN FRANCE AND CORSICA PARTLY IN SEARCH OF THE KIND OF LIFE THEY HAD BEEN LEADING FOR GENERATIONS IN NORTH AFRICA. AT THE TIME THESE PIEDS-NOIRS, MOSTLY MIDDLE-CLASS MERCHANTS AND FARMERS, RE-ESTABLISHED THEMSELVES IN THEIR OLD PROFESSIONS. THEY BENEFITED HEAVILY FROM GOF SUBSIDIES, GRANTS AND ASSISTANCE PROGRAMS IN THE FORM OF BANK LOANS.

2. THE QUESTION OF LOANS IS AT THE HEART OF THE CURRENT PROBLEM. SUPPORTED BY SUCH, THE PIEDS-NOIRS WERE ABLE TO PURCHASE LARGE TRACTS OF LAND IN CORSICA, MOSTLY VINEYARD, AND IN EFFECT UNDERTAKE A KIND OF SUPER DEVELOPMENT OF THE ISLAND THAT, FOR VARIOUS REASONS, DID NOT TOUCH THE CORSICAN HIMSELF. IN THE FIRST PLACE, NATIVE CORSICAN LANDOWNERS COULD NOT BENEFIT FROM THESE LOW-INTEREST LOANS AND WERE IN MANY CASES FORCED TO SELL OUT THEIR MARGINALLY DEVELOPED LAND TO THE PIEDS-NOIRS. IN THE SECOND PLACE, THE MASS EXODUS FROM CORSICA THAT BEGAN AFTER WW II, ESPECIALLY OF THE YOUNG, STRONGLY AGGRAVATED LOCAL FEELING OF ECONOMIC DESPERATION. ADDED TO THIS WAS THE FACT THAT GOF'S REGIONAL

CONFIDENTIAL

PAGE 03 PARIS 21701 01 OF 02 221840Z

DEVELOPMENT PLANS FOR CORSICA WERE HOLLOW, PATRONIZING PROGRAMS SELDOM CARRIED OUT IN FULL. THIRDLY, WITH THE ABSENCE OF AN ACTIVE LABOR FORCE, THE PIEDS-NOIRS BEGAN "IMPORTING" NORTH AFRICAN (ARAB) LABOR TO WORK THE LAND AND RUN THE FARM MACHINERY.

3. ARC AND ITS MORE VIOLENT COUNTERPART, GHJUSTIZIA PAOLINA, HAVE GIVEN AMPLE WARNING OF THEIR INTENTIONS.

ON THE LAST MAJOR OUTBREAK OF EXPLOSIONS ON MAY 21 OF  
THIS YEAR, NO LESS THAN ELEVEN BOMBS WENT OFF ON ONE  
DAY. THE DIFFERENCE NOW, HOWEVER, IS THAT FOR THE  
FIRST TIME IN RECENT HISTORY, HUMAN LIFE IS AT STAKE.  
THE ARC MILITANTS NOT ONLY TOOK OVER THE COOPERATIVE  
FARM, BUT HAVE TAKEN FOUR ALGERIAN WORKERS AND TWO  
FRENCH TOURISTS AS HOSTAGES. THEY HAVE PRESENTED THREE  
NON-NEGOTIABLE DEMANDS: ONE, THE ARREST OF "CROOKED"  
PIEDS-NOIRS WHOM THEY ACCUSE OF ILLEGAL WINE TRAFFICKING  
TO THE DETRIMENT OF THE CORSICAN ECONOMY; TWO, THE  
SEIZURE AND REDISTRIBUTION OF LANDS BELONGING TO THE  
PIEDS-NOIRS IN QUESTION; THREE, THE IMMEDIATE LIBERA-  
TION OF DOMINIQUE CAPRETTI, AN ARC MILITANT WHO WENT ON

CONFIDENTIAL

NNN

CONFIDENTIAL

PAGE 01 PARIS 21701 02 OF 02 221842Z

46

ACTION EUR-12

INFO OCT-01 NEA-10 ISO-00 EURE-00 SCS-03 FBO-02 SCCT-01

DHA-02 AID-05 CCO-00 PM-04 H-02 INR-07 L-03 NSC-05

SP-02 OC-05 OPR-02 PA-01 USSS-00 PRS-01 SCA-01 A-01

OMB-01 SS-15 SY-05 CIAE-00 DODE-00 NSAE-00 NSCE-00

SSO-00 USIE-00 INRE-00 COME-00 EB-07 LAB-04 SIL-01

TRSE-00 AGR-05 CIEP-01 MC-02 ACDA-05 IO-10 /126 W

----- 035276

O P 221819Z AUG 75

FM AMEMBASSY PARIS

TO SECSTATE WASHDC IMMEDIATE 2440

INFO AMEMBASSY ROME PRIORITY

AMEMBASSY ALGIERS PRIORITY

AMCONSUL BORDEAUX

AMCONSUL LYON

AMCONSUL MARSEILLE

AMCONSUL NICE

AMCONSUL STRASBOURG

CONFIDENTIAL SECTION 02 OF 02 PARIS 21701

TRIAL ON AUGUST 21 FOR ASSAULT OF A POLICEMAN. INTERIOR MINISTER PONIATOWSKI HAS DISPATCHED THE COMPAGNIE REPUBLICAIN DE L'ORDRE (CRS), A COMPANY OF WHAT AMOUNTS TO NATIONAL GUARD SHOCK TROOPS, TO DEAL WITH THE SITUATION. GABRIEL GILLY, WHO HAS BEEN PREFECT OF CORSICA SINCE FEBRUARY OF THIS YEAR, HAS VOWED THAT "ANY ILLEGAL ACTION WILL BRING ABOUT LEGAL CONSEQUENCES." IN VIEW OF PONIATOWSKI'S TRACK RECORD OF HEAVY-HANDED REACTION TO VIOLENCE OF THIS NATURE, IT WOULD SEEM THAT A SHORT-RUN VICTORY FOR ARC IS IMPROBABLE. DR. SIMEONI AND ARC HAVE A LEGAL STATUS IN FRANCE AND ARE RELUCTANTLY TOLER-  
CONFIDENTIAL

CONFIDENTIAL

PAGE 02 PARIS 21701 02 OF 02 221842Z

ATED AS A VALID POLITICAL ENTITY BY GOF. BUT THE SITUATION IS TIED IN WITH THE LONGSTANDING POLICY OF NONE-TOO-BENIGN NEGLECT OF THE HARKIS (PARIS 21205) ON THE PART OF THE MINISTRY OF THE INTERIOR, THE HARKIS BEING AS UNWELCOME IN ALGERIA AS THE PIEDS-NOIRS ARE IN MANY PARTS OF FRANCE.

4. COMMENT: CORSICA IS AN ISLAND, RICH IN NATURAL RESOURCES. HER LAND MASS AND POPULATION ARE FAR GREATER THAN THOSE OF MANY COUNTRIES CURRENTLY IN THE UN.

UNTIL NOW WHEN THE CORSICAN SAID AUTONOMY, HE HAS MEANT A KIND OF FEDERALIST POSITION, WITH THE CAPITAL CITY OF CORTE GOVERNING INTERNAL AFFAIRS AND GOF LOOKING AFTER FOREIGN POLICY. NOW, THINGS ARE GETTING OUT OF HAND. "CORSICA," SAYS SIMEONI, "IS NOT ALGERIA. WE MUST AVOID PROVOCATIONS, THE RISKS OF A CIVIL OR COLONIAL WAR. BUT IN ADDITION PEOPLE MUST KNOW WE ARE STRONG."

5. THAT IS AN UNDERSTATEMENT. MOST HOUSES IN CORSICA ARE ARMED HEAVILY, WITH ANYTHING FROM SHOTGUNS TO HAND GRENADES (IT IS REPORTED THAT THE ARC MILITANTS IN ALERIA HAVE MACHINEGUNS). WEAPONS THAT HAVE BEEN TRADITIONALLY USED AGAINST UNNEIGHBORLY VILLAGES COULD BE TURNED IN AN INSTANT AGAINST LES CONTINENTAUX (THE CONTINENTALS). SOME FRENCH TOURISTS RETURNING FROM CORSICA REPORT A VAGUE FEELING OF MENACE THEY EXPERIENCED WALKING INTO A BAR OR A CAFE. AND UNLIKE THE BASQUES, FOR EXAMPLE, OR THE BRETONS, CORSICANS SEE THEIR LAND FOR WHAT IT IS, DISTINCT FROM THE CONTINENT (INCLUDING ITALY) AND (THEY BELIEVE) PERFECTLY CAPABLE OF SUPPORTING ITSELF. IN ADDITION, SIMEONI'S USE OF

THE WORD "COLONIAL" IS NOT BY CHANCE, FOR THERE IS A  
GENERAL FEELING, EVEN AMONG NONMILITANT CORSICANS, THAT  
THE ISLAND HAS GIVEN ALL TO AND RECEIVED NOTHING FROM  
MOTHER FRANCE. ARC'S SIDE DEMANDS ARE STRICTLY  
POLITICO/ECONOMIC: CREATION OF EMPLOYMENT FOR YOUNG  
CORSICANS, THE "CORSIZATION" OF EXISTING JOBS, A CHARTER  
FOR RETURNED CORSICAN EXILES, PROMOTION OF CORSICAN  
CULTURE AND THE AGRICULTURAL RENOVATION OF THE ISLAND'S  
CONFIDENTIAL

CONFIDENTIAL

PAGE 03 PARIS 21701 02 OF 02 221842Z

INTERIOR. A REVOLUTION OF SORTS HAS BEGUN IN CORSICA,  
IRRETRIEVABLY. AUTONOMY IN INTERNAL AFFAIRS MAY NOT BE  
FOR TOMORROW, BUT WITH THE IMPORTANT STEP JUST MADE BY  
ARC, IT HAS TAKEN ON A MOMENTUM OF ITS OWN THAT IN ALL  
LIKELIHOOD GOF WILL FIND IMPOSSIBLE TO HALT.

6. AFTER THE ABOVE WAS DRAFTED, AFP REPORTED LATE  
AFTERNOON AUGUST 22 THAT THE POLICE LAUNCHED AN ASSAULT,  
WITH THE RESULT OF TWO OFFICERS KILLED, BEFORE OVER-  
WHELMING THE ARC MILITANTS.  
GAMMON

CONFIDENTIAL

NNN

## Message Attributes

**Automatic Decaptioning:** X  
**Capture Date:** 01 JAN 1994  
**Channel Indicators:** n/a  
**Current Classification:** UNCLASSIFIED  
**Concepts:** CORSICA, POLITICAL SITUATION, TERRORISTS, HOSTAGES, PRISONERS RELEASE  
**Control Number:** n/a  
**Copy:** SINGLE  
**Draft Date:** 22 AUG 1975  
**Decaption Date:** 01 JAN 1960  
**Decaption Note:**  
**Disposition Action:** RELEASED  
**Disposition Approved on Date:**  
**Disposition Authority:** RowellE0  
**Disposition Case Number:** n/a  
**Disposition Comment:** 25 YEAR REVIEW  
**Disposition Date:** 28 MAY 2004  
**Disposition Event:**  
**Disposition History:** n/a  
**Disposition Reason:**  
**Disposition Remarks:**  
**Document Number:** 1975PARIS21701  
**Document Source:** CORE  
**Document Unique ID:** 00  
**Drafter:** n/a  
**Enclosure:** n/a  
**Executive Order:** GS  
**Errors:** N/A  
**Film Number:** D750291-0798  
**From:** PARIS  
**Handling Restrictions:** n/a  
**Image Path:**  
**ISecure:** 1  
**Legacy Key:** link1975/newtext/t19750827/aaaaawzz.tel  
**Line Count:** 248  
**Locator:** TEXT ON-LINE, ON MICROFILM  
**Office:** ACTION EUR  
**Original Classification:** CONFIDENTIAL  
**Original Handling Restrictions:** n/a  
**Original Previous Classification:** n/a  
**Original Previous Handling Restrictions:** n/a  
**Page Count:** 5  
**Previous Channel Indicators:** n/a  
**Previous Classification:** CONFIDENTIAL  
**Previous Handling Restrictions:** n/a  
**Reference:** 74 PARIS A-608  
**Review Action:** RELEASED, APPROVED  
**Review Authority:** RowellE0  
**Review Comment:** n/a  
**Review Content Flags:**  
**Review Date:** 21 MAY 2003  
**Review Event:**  
**Review Exemptions:** n/a  
**Review History:** RELEASED <21 MAY 2003 by ShawDG>; APPROVED <07 OCT 2003 by RowellE0>  
**Review Markings:**

Margaret P. Grafeld  
Declassified/Released  
US Department of State  
EO Systematic Review  
06 JUL 2006

**Review Media Identifier:**  
**Review Referrals:** n/a  
**Review Release Date:** n/a  
**Review Release Event:** n/a  
**Review Transfer Date:**  
**Review Withdrawn Fields:** n/a  
**Secure:** OPEN  
**Status:** NATIVE  
**Subject:** DISTURBANCES IN CORSICA  
**TAGS:** PINT, PBOR, FR, ARC  
**To:** STATE  
**Type:** TE  
**Markings:** Margaret P. Grafeld Declassified/Released US Department of State EO Systematic Review 06 JUL 2006